



GET WISDOM SPEECH NIGHT TALK MILLENNIAL ACADEMY 2020

There was a television advert years ago that simply said, “*You haven’t got it till you get it!*” In simple terms, it was saying that we have not arrived, we have not succeeded, we are nobody, until we get what they were offering. The question therefore was: what was it that we were to get? What must we get? A teenager might like to think it meant “*get drunk*”; a cynic might say “*get a life*” while a romantic would say “*get a wife*”! It is my question to you tonight: what is the one thing you need to get? In a school context like this, you would think it means “*get a prize*”, or “*get three A*s*” or get Colours or become School Captain. In actual fact, though, there will probably be no prize tonight for this one thing you must get.

The answer, as with many things, can be found in Proverbs 4:5 with the father’s inspired advice: “*Get wisdom! Get insight.... Getting wisdom is the most important thing you can do.*” What is this wisdom though? It needs to be stated that it is not being clever, bright, academic or intellectual, which is what exams are about. Furthermore, it is not being witty, smart or funny, like Oscar Wilde (who said, “*I am not young enough to know everything*” and “*The only difference between a saint and a sinner is that every saint has a past and every sinner has a future*”) or Mark Twain (who said, “*Always do what is right. It will gratify half of mankind and astound the other*” and “*Never argue with stupid people, they will drag you down to their level and then beat you with experience*”). Furthermore, it is not being streetwise, which simply means you know how to get away with things that are wrong. It is not knowing right from wrong - that is just common sense.

Wisdom rather is knowing the right thing to do in each situation. It is knowing what to do with what you have or know or hear. More specifically, it is knowing what God wants you to do or say. So in fact it is knowing God’s purpose in each situation, for each person, at each time. Wisdom therefore is will-
dom, knowing and doing God’s will.

So how do you get wisdom, if it is what we must get? Contrary to popular opinion, wisdom does not come through age – certainly not automatically and not necessarily. There are plenty of old people who are not wise and plenty of young people who show far more wisdom than their elders. Equally it does not come simply through experience, as many would declare – experience may help us but it does not again necessarily mature us. Maturity helps, as does sensitivity, more so humility (though to make things complicated, we read that “*humility comes from wisdom*”!) Neither do you get wisdom by studying for exams.

In Job 28, Job and his friends debated where they can find real treasures and riches only to realise that is not how they will find wisdom. “*God alone knows the way, knows the place where wisdom is found.*” The fact is, as Solomon centuries before, you need wisdom to know you need wisdom! You need wisdom to get it. He was given the option to get whatever he wanted and he chose wisdom, as a result of which he was blessed abundantly in many other areas. We will be wise to do the same! As Job also concluded, “*To be wise, you must have reverence for the Lord. To understand, you must turn from evil.*” Get it? Get it! You won’t get a prize for it but it is to be prized highly [Prov. 4:8].

You as the younger generation should know it well as you are, after all, known as the Y Generation. Why are you the Y Generation? It may be because you love to ask the question “*why?*”. You are wise because you have YYYYs! You are wise to ask “*Why do people behave in such a way?*”, “*Why does God want this?*” and “*Why is this happening?*” It is very revealing that in His ‘school report’ it was said that Jesus as a boy “*grew both in body and wisdom, gaining favour with God and with man*” (Luke 2:52). He grew in wisdom. How did He do that? The verses before that one reveal that He spent hours in the Temple “*listening to the Jewish teachers and asking questions*”. Get it?

A wise man once said that a wise man once said nothing! Does it mean that because I have said it I must be wise? However it tells me I will be wise if I say nothing, and I have said lots already. So let me now say nothing; after all, as Ronan Keating once sang, “*You say it best when you say nothing at all.*” Have you got it? Get it!

- Tim Middleton, Executive Director, Association of Trust Schools